



## Industry Placements – frequently asked questions

### 1. Why are you promoting industry placements?

Industry placements will be a core part of T Levels, new courses starting in September 2020, which will follow GCSEs and will be equivalent to 3 A levels. T Levels combine classroom theory, practical learning and an industry placement to ensure that students have real experience of the workplace. T Levels are part of the government's reform of technical education to boost productivity and give young people the skills business needs.

The first T Levels will start in September 2020 at selected post-16 learning providers (colleges and schools) with more courses being offered in the years that follow. In time, there will be T Levels in subjects ranging from Accountancy through to Science.

The content for these 2-year courses has been developed by panels made up of employers, learning providers and representatives of trade organisations. Together they have identified the key knowledge, skills and behaviours that students will need to learn to ensure they are employable. To find out more about T Levels, visit [www.gov.uk/dfe/t-levels](http://www.gov.uk/dfe/t-levels)

### 2. What does an industry placement involve?

Industry placements give young people studying a technical course practical experience directly related to their course, helping to prepare them for the world of work. Employers like you play a key role in creating these opportunities for young people at the start of their careers. Placements help develop technical and employability skills and build confidence.

Placements last for a minimum of 45 working days and can be planned as single or multiple blocks, as day release or a combination. The longer duration gives students time to master the essentials and gives employers time to mould the student's abilities, so they can really add value to the organisation. The exact details of how the placement is organised is agreed between the local learning provider and the employer.

### 3. What is the difference between industry placements, apprenticeships and work experience?

Around 80% of a T Level will be spent in a classroom with the remaining 20% on industry placement. Apprenticeships, by contrast, are typically 80% on-the-job and 20% in the classroom and more suited to those who feel ready to enter the workforce. Work experience is typically much shorter, often just 1-2 weeks, and arranged by schools before GCSEs to give students a brief taste of being in work.

### 4. Why should I get involved now if T Levels are only starting in 2020?

We recognise that industry placements are new and a big adjustment for employers. Therefore, it is very important that as many employers as possible across all industries start working with local providers now to plan and deliver T Level-style placements so that the introduction of T Level courses from September 2020 onward goes smoothly.

## **5. Students need a lot of time and support, why should I get involved?**

We ran an extensive pilot with more than 1500 placements and the employers who took part in the pilots noticed real benefits. These included having extra resources for day-to-day projects; giving staff the chance to upskill through managing and mentoring students; bringing in imaginative and new ideas; the reward of supporting a young person; creating a more diverse workforce and providing a cost-effective recruitment pipeline for entry-level jobs. Industry placements are also an ideal way to spot young people for apprenticeships.

Providers are responsible for ensuring that students are ready for their industry placement so that, after an induction period, they become a productive member of the team. Before their placement starts, students will have completed employability skills training and other work-related learning, so they understand the demands and expectations of the workplace.

## **6. What do I have to do for an industry placement?**

Your role is to work with the learning provider to plan a structured placement and agree learning objectives that will give the student the experience they need to complete their course. Beyond that, you need to ensure the work environment is safe and that the student has a line manager to support, supervise and mentor them and to discuss their progress with the provider on a regular basis. At the end of the placement, you will need to provide an appraisal of the student's commitment and progress against the learning objectives.

## **7. What support will I get from the provider?**

Your local learning provider, whether a college, school or independent training provider, will work with you to plan the structure, timing, tasks and learning objectives of the placement. Over the course of the placement, you will have a named contact to call on in case of any issues or concerns. They will also arrange at least three workplace visits to check how the student is getting on. We hope that you and the provider will form a mutually rewarding partnership that will help many young people to have rewarding placements over the years.

## **8. Do I have to pay students on industry placements?**

Our aim is for students and businesses to benefit from industry placements without causing avoidable costs to either. Industry placements are part of a course and there is no legal requirement or expectation that students will be paid. However, we recognise that unpaid placements may discourage some employers, so you are able to pay students if you wish.

## **9. What about the costs of a placement, is there any help with that?**

We recognise the importance of minimising the burden of taking on a placement student. Your learning provider has access to funding to help with industry placements and can, at their discretion, use this to help you with upfront costs, such as providing protective gear, DBS checks, specialist equipment etc.

## **10. How can I find out more or get involved in industry placements?**

To find out more about industry placements, please contact an industry placement account manager on **08000 150 600** or [tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk](mailto:tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk)

You can also listen to the British Chamber of Commerce podcast on T Levels and industry placements at <https://britishchambers.qumucloud.com/view/7v8zZ5v2noy>